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BSTRACT

Based upon the efforts of the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD) to develop a comprehensive set of general education goals and directions, this paper suggests principles for the development of community college general education curricula. While conceding that a core curriculum for general education is an excellent statement of a college's values, the paper first warns against adopting university models for general education which are unsuited for today's nontraditional student. The DCCCD's efforts to involve faculty and community leaders in the identification of essential "Skills for Living" are then described. Finally, five principles that emerged from these efforts are discussed: (1) each college must develop its own goals for general education; (2) staff must be allowed time to become familiar with and committed to these goals; (3) the goals must have community affirmation; (4) faculty commitment to general education is essential; and (5) the goals must be integrated into the institutional planning process. A second report summarizes the underlying assumptions, goals, and specific objectives of DCCCD's "Skills for Living," which provide directional guidelines for developing eight competency areas: living with oneself, others, and the environment; living as a producer, consumer, and in the community; and living creatively and in the future. (JP)

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GENERAL EDUCATION IN THE DCCCD
(DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT)
and
SKILLS FOR LIVING

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GENERAL EDUCATION IN THE DCCCD
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RUTH G. SHAW

AS THE FOREGOING REMARKS HAVE ILLUSTRATED ALL TOO CLEARLY, THE DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT HAS PROBABLY BEEN A TYPICAL MODEL OF HOW NOT TO PROCEED IN DEVELOPING A GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM. ALTHOUGH WE MIGHT BE ACCUSED OF RATIONALIZING OUR MISTAKES OR SIMPLY MAKING THE BEST OF A BAD SITUATION, WE BELIEVE THAT DURING THE ROCKY COURSE OF THE PAST FOUR YEARS, WE HAVE ESTABLISHED SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES THAT ARE WORTHY OF SHARING AS OTHER COLLEGES ENDEAVOR TO DEVELOP THIS CRITICAL MEANS OF "SHAPING SOCIETY."

ONE PREMISE THAT WE HAVE COME TO ACCEPT IN DALLAS IS THAT TRADITIONAL, UNIVERSITY-ORIENTED MODELS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION NEVER WILL HAVE WIDESPREAD EFFECT IN OUR COLLEGES. THE TRADITIONAL MODELS ARE THE ONES WITH WHICH YOU ARE ALL FAMILIAR: THEY ARE CENTERED AROUND A CORE CURRICULUM FROM THE HUMANITIES, THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES, AND THE BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES; OR THEY FOCUS UPON "DISTRIBUTION COURSES" FROM THESE CORE AREAS IN A CAFETERIA, STUDENT SELECTION APPROACH; OR THEY INCLUDE SOME COMBINATION OF THESE TWO BASIC MODELS. FOR THE DEGREE-SEEKING ACADEMIC TRANSFER STUDENT--INDEED, FOR THE STUDENT SEEKING A DEGREE OF ANY SORT--SUCH A GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM MODEL MAY BE PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE.

IF THE AIM OF GENERAL EDUCATION IS TO PROVIDE THE "COMMON LEARNING" NECESSARY TO ALL EDUCATED MEN AND WOMEN, THEN CERTAINLY THE STRUCTURE OF THIS MODEL OFFERS A MANAGEABLE APPROACH. IT IS ADMINISTRATIVELY TIDY AND PEDAGOGICALLY NEAT.

UNFORTUNATELY, IF YOUR STUDENT POPULATION IS ANYTHING LIKE THAT OF THE DCCCD, SUCH RATIONAL, SEQUENTIAL, CURRICULAR LOGIC SIMPLY DOES NOT APPLY TO LARGE NUMBERS OF YOUR STUDENTS. OUR STUDENTS TEND TO BE IRRATIONAL, NON-SEQUENTIAL, AND ILLOGICAL IN THEIR COURSE CHOICES. THEY REFUSE TO BE ROUTED THROUGH THE ORDERLY BOXES OF OUR CURRICULUM FLOW CHARTS. OUR STUDENTS ARE NOT CLEAN SLATES, COMING TO US TO BE WRITTEN UPON. INSTEAD, THEIR MENTAL CHALKBOARDS ARE FULL OF THE SCRIBBLINGS AND ERASURES THAT CHARACTERIZE ADULTHOOD. THE STUDENTS ARE PART-TIME, DROP-IN, DROP-OUT, NIGHT, DAY, DEGREE-HOLDING, NON-DEGREE SEEKING, SKILLS ORIENTED MASSES OF HETEROGENEITY.

GIVEN THE TREMENDOUS CHALLENGE OF IDENTIFYING - MUCH LESS PROVIDING - WHAT SHOULD CONSTITUTE GENERAL EDUCATION FOR THIS RICHLY DIVERSE GROUP OF STUDENTS, IT IS LITTLE WONDER THAT COMMUNITY COLLEGES HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT SLOW TO ACCEPT THIS FUNDAMENTAL ROLE IN THE SHAPING OF SOCIETY. LOFTIER ACADEMICS MAY WRESTLE WITH THE QUESTION OF "WHAT" IS TO BE COMMON LEARNING; THOSE OF US IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES ARE DESTINED TO GRAPPLE LONG AND HARD WITH "HOW."

LET ME HASTEN TO SAY THAT I DO NOT INTEND TO DEMEAN THE VALUE OF A GENERAL EDUCATION CORE. AS WE HAVE EXAMINED ONE GENERAL EDUCATION CURRICULUM AFTER ANOTHER, I HAVE BECOME CONVINCED THAT A CLEARLY DEFINED CORE HAS GREAT VALUE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES. NOT ONLY DOES THIS CORE FULFILL ITS TRADITIONAL INTEGRATING, LIBERALIZING,

AND LIBERATING FUNCTIONS FOR DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS, BUT IT PROVIDES A CLEAR CURRICULAR STATEMENT ABOUT THE VALUES OF THE COLLEGE. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT ALL STUDENTS ENROLL IN THE CORE, THE VALUES WHICH IT REFLECTS WILL PERMEATE THE CURRICULUM. CERTAINLY WHAT A COLLEGE DEFINES AS ESSENTIAL FOR "COMMON LEARNING" GOES TO THE VERY HEART OF THE INSTITUTIONAL PURPOSE AND PRIORITIES. BUT WE HAVE DETERMINED THAT THE TASK IS MUCH LARGER THAN DEFINING THE CORE. TO SERVE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS, GENERAL EDUCATION MUST BE INTEGRATED THROUGHOUT THE CURRICULUM, THE EXTRA-CURRICULUM, AND THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM.

SIMPLY DEFINING THE CORE IS NOT AN EASY TASK, AND I AM NO LONGER ABASHED TO ADMIT THAT WE HAVE NOT DEFINED A SOLID GENERAL EDUCATION CORE IN THE DCCCD AFTER NEARLY FOUR YEARS OF FITFUL, SPORADIC ATTENTION TO THIS ISSUE. ONCE WE RECOGNIZED THAT A GENERAL EDUCATION CORE, IN AND OF ITSELF, WOULD NOT BEGIN TO RESOLVE THE GENERAL EDUCATION ISSUE WITH US, WE IMMERSSED OURSELVES IN SEVERAL OTHER AREAS OF ACTIVITY. WHILE I AM CERTAIN THAT WE HAD NO GUIDING PRINCIPLES AS WE MOVED IN THESE DIRECTIONS, I BELIEVE THAT SOME SOUND NOTIONS DEVELOPED FROM OUR STRUGGLES. I'LL DESCRIBE SOME OF OUR ACTIVITIES AND THEN OUTLINE THE PRINCIPLES THAT I BELIEVE HAVE EMERGED.

WE SPENT ENDLESS (OR SEEMINGLY ENDLESS) HOURS IN DISCUSSION OF "SKILLS FOR LIVING" IN COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND ON CAMPUS. THE GENESIS OF "SKILLS FOR LIVING" IS CRITICAL: IT WAS DEVELOPED BY A FACULTY GROUP, REVISED BY ANOTHER FACULTY GROUP, AND CIRCULATED THROUGHOUT OUR DISTRICT TO ALL STAFF (OVER 2000 EMPLOYEES) ON AT LEAST THREE OCCASIONS. THE CONTENTS OF "SKILLS FOR LIVING," OUR COMPREHENSIVE SET OF GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS AND DIRECTIONS, MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU, AND I HAVE BROUGHT SOME COPIES. TO NO ONE'S SURPRISE, WE HAVE FOUND GREAT OVERLAP BETWEEN OUR "SKILLS FOR LIVING"

AND COUNTLESS OTHER SETS OF GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS. THIS IS AS IT SHOULD BE, BUT NO OTHER SET OF GOALS WOULD HAVE WORKED AS WELL FOR US. THE TWO PRINCIPLES THAT HAVE EMERGED FROM THESE EXPERIENCES ARE SIMPLE AND FAMILIAR ONES, AND THEY ARE IMPERATIVE IN GENERAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OR REVISION.

PRINCIPLE 1: YOUR COLLEGE MUST DEVELOP ITS OWN SET OF GENERAL EDUCATION DIRECTIONS AND GOALS.

WITH THE RENEWED INTEREST IN GENERAL EDUCATION, EXEMPLIFIED BY THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION'S RECENT "COLLOQUIUM FOR COMMON LEARNING," IT WILL BE MORE TEMPTING THAN EVER TO SEARCH FOR A SET OF PROMISING GOALS AND ADOPT THEM AS YOUR OWN. IN OUR CONCERN FOR EFFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION, IT SEEMS WASTEFUL TO "REINVENT THE WHEEL," AS WE SO COLORFULLY DESCRIBE IT. BUT THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT IF THE WHEEL DOES NOT FIT YOUR VEHICLE, IT WILL LURCH ALONG RATHER AWKWARDLY, IF IT ROLLS AT ALL. SIMPLY PUT, THE GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS FOR YOUR COLLEGE MUST BE DESIGNED FOR A UNIQUE FIT, DESPITE THEIR "COMMONALITY" WITH OTHER SUCH MODELS.

PRINCIPLE 2: FACULTY AND STAFF THROUGHOUT THE COLLEGE MUST BE ALLOWED THE TIME TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH AND ULTIMATELY COMMITTED TO YOUR GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS.

THIS PROCESS CANNOT BE HASTENED. IT REQUIRES REPEATED AND VARYING AND NOT NECESSARILY SYSTEMATIC EXPOSURES TO THE GOALS. IT REQUIRES INFINITE PATIENCE FROM THOSE EAGER TO PRESS ON AND FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT FOR GENERAL EDUCATION. BUT WITHOUT IT, GENERAL EDUCATION WILL REMAIN THE ATTIC OF

COMMUNITY COLLEGE EDUCATION. IF, AS ERNIE BOYER SAYS, COMMON LEARNING HAS BEEN THE SPARE ROOM IN HIGHER EDUCATION, IT HAS BEEN RELEGATED A LOFTIER, MORE OBSCURE, MORE CLUTTERED, AND EVEN MORE FRIGHTENING ROOM ASSIGNMENT IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ATTIC.

ANOTHER ACTIVITY WHICH HAS CONSUMED MUCH TIME AND ENERGY OVER THE PAST YEAR HAS BEEN A SERIES OF "COMMUNITY FORUMS" (OR FORA, FOR PURISTS). THESE COMMUNITY FORUMS WERE DESIGNED TO INVOLVE COMMUNITY LEADERS FROM THROUGHOUT DALLAS COUNTY IN A DISCUSSION OF "SKILLS FOR LIVING." IF YOU BELIEVE THAT THE THOUGHT OF INVITING IN TEXAS OIL TYCOONS, BUSINESS EXECUTIVES, CIVIC LEADERS, AND THE LIKE TO SPEND TWO TO THREE HOURS DISCUSSING GENERAL EDUCATION IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS NOT AN AWESOME ONE, DO THINK AGAIN!

WE APPROACHED THIS ENDEAVOR WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING. OUR COMMUNITY IMAGE HAS ALWAYS BEEN STRONG AND POSITIVE. IF PARTICIPANTS FOUND THE FORUMS A WASTE OF TIME OR, WORSE, THOUGHT OUR COMMITMENT TO GENERAL EDUCATION INAPPROPRIATE, WE WOULD LOSE GROUND NOT ONLY IN GENERAL EDUCATION, BUT IN OUR OVERALL COMMUNITY STANDING. THE OBVIOUS QUESTION IS, WHY DO IT? WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO GAIN THAT COULD MAKE SUCH A VENTURE WORTH THE RISKS? AND OUR CHANCELLOR PUT THAT QUESTION TO US NONE TOO GENTLY. IN OUR RESPONSE IS FOUND THE THIRD PRINCIPLE:

PRINCIPLE 3: THE GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS AND PROGRAMS OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE MUST REFLECT ITS UNIQUE DIMENSIONS.

CERTAINLY ONE OF THE ISOLATING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS ITS COMMUNITY BASE. WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON

RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY NEEDS, BUT WE TYPICALLY LIMIT THIS RESPONSIVENESS TO TECHNICAL/OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM OFFERINGS OR APPROPRIATE NON-CREDIT COURSE OFFERINGS. WE OFTEN INVOLVE THE COMMUNITY IN CAREER PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES; WE RARELY INVITE THEM IN TO DISCUSS GENERAL EDUCATION FUNCTIONS, DESPITE OUR RECOGNITION OF THE CRITICAL ROLE THAT GENERAL EDUCATION CAN PLAY IN SHAPING SOCIETY.

IF COMMUNITY COLLEGES ARE TO FULFILL THEIR ROLE AS COMPREHENSIVE, COMMUNITY-BASED COLLEGES, THEN THEIR GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS AND DIRECTIONS MUST HAVE COMMUNITY AFFIRMATION. IT WAS THIS AFFIRMATION THAT WE SOUGHT AND FOUND THROUGH THE COMMUNITY FORUM STRUCTURE. WE BEGAN THIS ADVENTURE WITH A FORUM OF TOP DISTRICT EXECUTIVES AND DALLAS COUNTY LEADERS. THE GROUP OF 64 CONVENED FOR A LUNCHEON, SEATED AT EIGHT TABLES OF EIGHT. EACH TABLE HAD AS ITS DISCUSSION TOPIC ONE OF THE EIGHT AREAS OF OUR "SKILLS FOR LIVING" GOALS. WE INVITED KEN ASHWORTH, TEXAS COMMISSIONER OF HIGHER EDUCATION, TO ADDRESS THE GROUP. AFTER WE DESCRIBED OUR COMMITMENT TO GENERAL EDUCATION AND OUR NEED FOR THEIR CRITICAL REVIEW, THE GROUPS SET TO WORK. AND THEY SET TO WORK WITH VIGOR AND ENTHUSIASM. THEIR SUGGESTIONS WERE INSIGHTFUL; THEIR SUPPORT WAS NOTHING SHORT OF OVERWHELMING. DURING TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK, EACH OF OUR SEVEN COLLEGES HELD A COMMUNITY FORUM FOR THE LEADERS FROM ITS RESPECTIVE SERVICE AREA. WITH EACH ITERATION, "SKILLS FOR LIVING" BECAME A STRONGER

STATEMENT ABOUT WHAT GENERAL EDUCATION SHOULD BE IN THE DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT. BEFORE THE FORUM SERIES ENDED, NEARLY 500 COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND STAFF MEMBERS HAD DELIBERATED TOGETHER OVER WHAT CONSTITUTED COMMON LEARNING. AND THIS DELIBERATION WAS NOT AN ACADEMIC EXERCISE. IT PROMOTED A NEW KIND OF INVOLVEMENT THAT OUR COMMUNITY WELCOMED.

NOT ONLY DID THE FORUMS INVOLVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS; THEY RE-INVOLVED FACULTY AND STAFF WHO HAD BECOME SOMEWHAT DISENGAGED FROM THE ENDEAVOR. CERTAINLY OUR FOURTH PRINCIPLE WILL SURPRISE NO ONE:

PRINCIPLE 4: AT ITS HEART, GENERAL EDUCATION MUST BE A FACULTY COMMITMENT IF IT IS TO BE MEANINGFUL.

TOO OFTEN, GENERAL EDUCATION NOT ONLY LIVES IN THE COLLEGE ATTIC, BUT IT IS THE FACULTY STEPCHILD. COMMUNITY COLLEGES HAVE SOME ADVANTAGES OVER SENIOR INSTITUTIONS IN THIS REGARD, FOR THE TRADITIONAL PROFESSIONAL IDENTIFICATION WITH A DISCIPLINE IS NOT SO FIRMLY ENTRENCHED IN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE SETTING. BUT ADMINISTRATORS CAN DO LITTLE MORE THAN PROVIDE DIRECTION AND SUPPORT FOR GENERAL EDUCATION; IT WILL ULTIMATELY SINK OR SWIM WITH YOUR FACULTY. AND I DO MEAN ALL FACULTY. HIGH INTEREST FROM "LIBERAL ARTS" FACULTY WILL NOT CARRY THE DAY; ALL FACULTY MUST BE INVOLVED IN GENERAL EDUCATION.

WE ARE STILL VERY MUCH IN THE PROCESS OF BUILDING FACULTY COMMITMENT --AND I AM CONFIDENT THAT THIS PROCESS WILL BE A NEVER-ENDING ONE. WE SENT SEVEN FACULTY MEMBERS TO THE "COLLOQUIM FOR COMMON LEARNING" SPONSORED BY THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION. THEY REVELED IN THE HEADY ACADEMIC ATMOSPHERE; THEY PONDERED BASIC QUESTIONS OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY; THEY TOOK GREAT PRIDE IN THE "SKILLS FOR LIVING" DEVELOPED BY THEIR PEERS. AND THEY RETURNED TO THE DISTRICT EAGER TO SHARE WHAT THEY HAD LEARNED.

THERE IS A LONG WAY TO GO, BUT THE SIGNS ARE ENCOURAGING: GENERAL EDUCATION MAY YET BECOME A FACULTY ISSUE IN THE DCCCD. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT IT DO SO, FOR GENERAL EDUCATION IS, IN NO SMALL MEASURE, A STATE OF MIND WHICH DEPENDS UPON FACULTY MODELS OF BEHAVIOR FOR ITS TRANSMISSION AND TRANSLATION TO STUDENTS.

ONE OF THE MAJOR EFFORTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES COMMITTEE WAS THE INCORPORATION OF THE EIGHT FUNDAMENTAL "SKILLS FOR LIVING" GOALS INTO OUR DISTRICT GOALS. THIS EFFORT GREW OUT OF OUR BELIEF IN A FIFTH AND FINAL PRINCIPLE:

PRINCIPLE 5: GENERAL EDUCATION GOALS MUST BE INTERNALIZED INSTITUTIONAL PRIORITIES IF THEY ARE TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT EFFECT.

CERTAINLY THE SUPPORT OF TOP LEADERSHIP IS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE GENERAL EDUCATION EFFORT, AND WE HAVE HAD SUCH SUPPORT FROM THE OUTSET. BUT IT IS CRUCIAL THAT THESE BROAD GOALS BE INCORPORATED INTO OUR INSTITUTIONAL PLANNING STRUCTURES IF THEY ARE TO BE ADDRESSED NOT ONLY THROUGH CORE COURSES, BUT THROUGH ALL CREDIT COURSES AND THROUGHOUT STUDENT ACTIVITIES, NON-CREDIT OFFERINGS, CULTURAL EVENTS AND THE LIKE. "SKILLS FOR LIVING," A STATEMENT OF DIRECTIONS FOR GENERAL EDUCATION, HAS BECOME AN INTEGRATING FORCE FOR DEVELOPMENT OF OUR OWN STAFF AND OUR SENSE OF INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY.

WHERE ARE WE NOW? STILL STRUGGLING; READY TO TACKLE THE CORE AND TO BEGIN TO IDENTIFY AND CATALOG OTHER WAYS IN WHICH WE ARE ADDRESSING "SKILLS FOR LIVING." WE ARE PROBABLY STILL

TWO TO THREE YEARS FROM A "FINISHED PRODUCT" OF WHICH WE CAN BE PROUD. WHY BOTHER, YOU MIGHT ASK. IT'S BECAUSE WE SHARE JACK ARBOLINO'S BELIEF OF THE LASTING VALUE OF COLLEGE EDUCATION: "IT'S SO THAT LATER ON IN LIFE, WHEN YOU KNOCK ON YOURSELF, SOMEBODY ANSWERS."

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SKILLS FOR LIVING
DALLAS COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

RATIONALE

The basic purpose of the Dallas County Community College District is "to help students equip themselves for effective living and for responsible citizenship in a rapidly changing local, state, national and world community." Much of what is required for effective living and responsible citizenship is seen as intangible, subjective, value-laden, and thus difficult to measure. Even so, the Dallas County Community College District recognizes its responsibility for addressing these issues. "Skills for Living" are designed to give concrete form to the "equipment" required for effective living.

Such "life skills" are not new to the realm of higher education; in fact, they have been fundamental to the general education of our youth for centuries. But in a time of increasing specialization and fragmentation, the fundamental principles that integrate the educational program must be emphasized. The Dallas County Community College District seeks not only to provide occupational and academic transfer programs, but also to develop in all of its graduates those knowledges, skills, and attitudes that will prepare them for "effective living and responsible citizenship." These life skills are not taught in a single course, but are reinforced throughout the curriculum and reflected in college degree requirements.

In earlier times, the "basics" of reading, writing, and arithmetic were not considered a part of general education. Rather, they were fundamental to it. Today, one cannot assume that all students are competent in these areas. The Dallas County Community College District adheres to the belief

that these skills are basic to effective living, and is committed to producing graduates who are competent in reading, writing, and computation. The development of these skills is a priority throughout the District and is fundamental to the general education provided by "Skills for Living."

ORGANIZATION

The eight competency areas identified in this report are divided into three broad and somewhat indistinct categories. The first category, which is termed "Relationships," includes the following competency areas: LIVING WITH YOURSELF; LIVING WITH OTHERS; and LIVING WITH ENVIRONMENTS. Individual fulfillment and social responsibility are achieved, in part, through the realization of one's unique sense of self, and through the responsible acceptance of the interdependency of that self with others and with one's environment. Upon this assumption the "Relationships" category is based.

Individuals play three important economic and socio-political roles in their lifetimes.

1. As workers, they contribute to the production of goods and services;
2. As consumers, they use the results of that production; and
3. As citizens and community members, they influence economic and socio-political decisions.

Thus the second competency category, "Roles and Functions" includes the following areas: LIVING AS A PRODUCER; LIVING AS A CONSUMER; and LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY.

The third category, "Orientations," is based upon the premise that an individual's approach to life situations is fundamental in whatever roles or relationships one is involved. A creative and futuristic approach to life

provides for individual growth and a greater readiness to accommodate change, and it can contribute to the development of a more dynamic and positive society. Thus LIVING CREATIVELY and LIVING IN THE FUTURE are competency areas included in this category.

Each competency area includes the assumptions upon which it is based, the goal to which it is directed, and a set of competency statements. The goal statements are, purposely, somewhat general in order to allow for change and for some latitude in interpretation. For example, LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY never specifies whether that community is local, state, national or international, thus allowing the competencies to be applied in an array of situations.

SUMMARY

The "Skills for Living" document establishes directions for the general education of DCCCD students. Many of the statements reflect outcomes that cannot be measured. Like the mission of our district, these statements are not objectives that are accomplished and replaced. Rather, they provide a map, a guide that is part of a continuing cycle which provides the basis for setting educational goals and developing instructional programs.

RELATIONSHIPS: LIVING WITH YOURSELF

ASSUMPTION: Individual growth can be achieved, in part, through the realization and expression of one's unique sense of self.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide direction and opportunities for students to become more competent in developing themselves as individuals.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Assess themselves objectively in order to achieve an awareness and acceptance of their capabilities and limitations.
2. Make appropriate decisions and cope successfully with adversities and setbacks, using them as opportunities for development.
3. Develop the self-direction, self-discipline, and sense of responsibility necessary to identify and pursue life goals.
4. Apply various methods to examine and assess their attitudes and values, understanding how these attitudes and values will influence all dimensions of their lives.
5. Employ various approaches for creatively assessing and solving problems and setting and achieving goals.
6. Develop realistic attitudes, plans and provisions for changing life situations and their own life cycles.
7. Learn, understand and employ methods for successfully dealing with change and mental physical stress.
8. Examine and implement the principles of nutrition, exercise, safety and disease prevention that will contribute to their life-long health.
9. Develop skills necessary for self-expression and for competent communications with others.
10. Develop and employ skills for learning and processing information that are necessary for existence in a technologically advanced environment.
11. Develop the understanding and skills that will allow for satisfying use of leisure time.
12. Develop the knowledge that can enable them to face their own deaths with honesty, dignity, and foresight.
13. Understand themselves as individuals in the total historical and cultural context, avoiding a narrow view of the world and their place in it.

RELATIONSHIPS: LIVING WITH OTHERS

ASSUMPTION: Individual fulfillment can be achieved, in part, by successful interaction with others.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide opportunities for students to become more proficient in establishing and maintaining satisfying relationships with others.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Communicate well with others using verbal and non-verbal skills.
2. Develop listening skills that are necessary for meaningful communications and interaction with others.
3. Understand the relationship among values, goals and behavior, and how this complex relationship affects interaction with others.
4. Accept individual responsibility for their behavior in building and maintaining relationships.
5. Use their knowledge of personal values and attitudes in understanding their interactions with other individuals, with members of a group, with handicapped individuals, and with differing elements of a heterogeneous society.
6. Participate in conflict resolution and work toward common goals by systematically solving problems when cooperating or collaborating in mutual endeavors.
7. Establish and maintain relationships at different levels of intensity.
8. Identify unsatisfactory personal relationships and make constructive decisions regarding those relationships.
9. Understand and apply parenting skills.
10. Accept, tolerate, and cope with frustration and delayed gratification from the efforts of living with others.
11. Develop the coping skills necessary to adjust to the loss or termination of a relationship, including the death of a loved one.

RELATIONSHIPS: LIVING WITH ENVIRONMENTS

ASSUMPTION: The quality of one's life depends, in part, upon an understanding of and responsible relationship with one's environment.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide opportunities for students to understand the relationship between individuals and their environment and make responsible decisions about the use of natural, human, technological, and spatial resources.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Demonstrate awareness of the need to balance long term environmental objectives against economic and social needs.
2. Demonstrate awareness of the need to make wise, efficient use of all natural resources, including food, land, energy, wood, soil, and minerals.
3. Demonstrate an awareness and understanding of the social and political systems which influence environmental policy and the way individuals may participate in these systems.
4. Demonstrate awareness of the need for applying sound ecological principles in urban, regional and national planning which affects transportation systems, availability of energy, social behavior, health, education, housing, pollution, and diversity and stability in cities.
5. Demonstrate awareness of the ecological interactions and interdependency between man, other living beings, and the environment.
6. Demonstrate awareness of the effects of the environment on human behavior and health.
7. Demonstrate awareness of how human behavior and technology can enhance or detract from the environment.
8. Demonstrate an awareness of the environmental importance of historical, cultural and natural aspects of our heritage and the importance of diversity and variety of individual choice.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS: LIVING AS A PRODUCER

ASSUMPTION: Individuals shape society and are shaped significantly by society through their experiences as workers both in the home and on the job.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide opportunities for students to become more competent producers.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Understand the factors that influence our attitudes and behavior concerning work and use this understanding to develop a successful and productive work attitude and ethic.
2. Appreciate the value of all types of work, from family room to board room, and of all workers that contribute to personal productivity and a productive society.
3. Communicate effectively in a variety of work situations to bring about constructive change and resolve conflict.
4. Understand the nature and role of self-motivation as it relates to successful and productive work experiences and develop the ability to motivate others.
5. Identify the steps involved in career development in order to update career decisions throughout life.
6. Understand the concepts of personal and professional ethics, including their demands and rewards, as they function in a variety of work situations.
7. Identify, develop, and apply personal characteristics which would enhance leadership abilities.
8. Understand the relationship between expectations of consumers and the responsibilities of producers.
9. Identify and evaluate organizational structures and characteristics as they relate to work roles and personal goals and values.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS: LIVING AS A CONSUMER

ASSUMPTION: Consumer skills are necessary to function effectively in our society.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide opportunities for students to become more competent as consumers.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Understand the American economic system and its impact upon the individual consumer.
2. Understand the unique nature and dynamics of the American free enterprise system.
3. Understand consumer responsibilities and impacts of consumer behavior, including the relationship between expectations of consumers and the responsibilities of producers.
4. Identify laws and agencies which control, protect, and serve consumers and use such laws and agencies to protect and enhance personal and community consumer rights.
5. Understand and manage personal finances in areas such as budgeting, banking, insurance, credit, investments, and taxes.
6. Understand bases for comparison shopping to obtain maximum satisfaction from goods and services.
7. Possess the basic computational and reading skills to enable them to function as effective consumers.
8. Understand the techniques of advertising and the effects of mass communications on expectations and actions.

ROLES AND FUNCTIONS: LIVING IN THE COMMUNITY

ASSUMPTION: The quality of one's life depends, in part, upon successful relationship with one's community.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide opportunities for students to become more competent in using their skills and initiative to serve their community and improve its quality of life.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Understand the personal commitment necessary for responsible community involvement.
2. Contribute to the study and analysis of community problems and the implementation of practical solutions to these problems as an individual or as a member of a group.
3. Understand social and political processes and their structures in order to enhance their own well-being and that of the community.
4. Locate and employ appropriate public and/or private services for assistance in solving individual or community problems.
5. Understand and apply constructive strategies which take into account diverse interests in the resolution of community issues.
6. Evaluate and understand the relationship between community values and personal value commitments.
7. Demonstrate awareness of the impact of community decisions on individuals and groups.

ORIENTATIONS: LIVING CREATIVELY

ASSUMPTION: Individual creative abilities can be identified, developed, and utilized to benefit both the individual and society.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide opportunities for students to become more proficient in the assessment, development, and application of their creative abilities.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Develop critical reasoning abilities that demonstrate independence of thought.
2. Develop and maintain an attitude of curiosity.
3. Formulate a visionary and open attitude toward change which may require modification or rejection of previously accepted ideas.
4. Develop and use individual talents for creative expression.
5. Develop creative abilities as a person.
6. Identify quality in artistic expression and seek to include this quality in their lives.
7. Employ a courageous attitude in expressing their personal convictions.
8. Creatively explore concepts and bodies of knowledge and constructively question established ideas.
9. Appreciate work as a reflection of man's creative endeavors.
10. Develop an appreciation for spontaneity both in their own lives and the lives of others.

ORIENTATIONS: LIVING IN THE FUTURE

ASSUMPTION: Examination of possibilities for the future will enable individuals to adapt to change more readily.

GOAL: Each DCCCD college will provide opportunities for students to become more proficient in anticipating and accommodating change and to become more competent in examining possible alternatives for the future.

STUDENTS CAN:

1. Understand the inevitability of change.
2. Recognize the effects of change on individuals and society.
3. Consider possible changes in organizations of the future which could affect working environments.
4. Understand the changes created in and by a technological society and the possible impacts of these changes.
5. Examine and assess human values that may be required to survive in the possible societies of the future.
6. Consider possible changes to present governmental functions in societies of the future.
7. Examine and assess possible impacts of trends in science and medicine and the attendant ethical problems.
8. Examine and assess possible changes in lifestyles associated with natural resource depletion.
9. Recognize possibilities for transportation and communication in the future and the attendant impacts on society.
10. Analyze forms leisure might take in the future.

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